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United States Department of Agriculture,

BUREAU OF CHEMISTRY.

SUMMARY OF PURE-FOOD LAWS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES AFFECTING
AMERICAN EXPORTS.

[For the information of exporters of American food products.]

It is impracticable in a brief summary to give full particulars respecting the prohibition and restriction of the sale of American food products entering foreign countries. Moreover, new laws are enacted from time to time and new regulations having the authority of law are adopted. Exporters may, however, avoid most of the dangers of prohibition or confiscation by complying with the following regulations and by availing themselves of the privileges of the law in regard to inspection.

With the exceptions noted below, almost any food product which is in a good state of preservation and is labeled plainly and distinctly, and in such a manner as to give a true idea of its character, may be sold in any country. In general, however, the only preservatives that can be used with perfect safety are salt, sugar, vinegar, and wood smoke.

Further information in regard to the foreign food laws can be obtained by applying to the Secretary of Agriculture for Bulletin No. 61, of the Bureau of Chemistry.

CEREAL PRODUCTS.

Almost all countries require that cereal products shall be prepared from grain that is free from dirt and fungi, mineral matter, and other impurities. The mixture of the ground product of various cereals, or of cereal flour with pea flour, etc., is permitted only when properly labeled.

COLORING MATTER.

All countries permit the dyeing of confections and similar articles which are themselves colorless, but are customarily colored artificially. Lists of permissible and of prohibited colors have been adopted by Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Roumania, and Switzerland. Belgium permits mustard to be colored artificially when properly labeled. Belgium and Holland require that wine to which coloring matter has been added shall be so marked as to indicate that fact. The addition of injurious coloring matter to wine is prohibited in Denmark, France, and Tunis.

DAIRY PRODUCTS.

The requirements of various countries regarding dairy products are very similar to those affecting meat. Butter and cheese substitutes are required to be branded according to carefully prescribed directions, and the amount of butter fat which these substitutes may contain is limited. Belgium requires that oleomargarine shall be sold uncolored, while in Holland and Denmark a maximum depth of color is prescribed.

MEAT PRODUCTS.

The German law prohibits the importation of canned meat, sausage, and comminuted meat of all descriptions. Fresh meat may be imported under restrictions. The addition to meat of preservatives and coloring matter is usually prohibited.

PRESERVATIVES.

The sale of foods containing these substances is usually prohibited. Salicylic acid and boric acid have been used so much more commonly than others that

legislation is usually directed against them, though boards of health and similar bodies which have discretion in the matter usually extend the prohibitions to benzoic acid and other preservatives as they come into use.

The sale of foods containing preservatives is prohibited in Austria, France, Hungary, and Roumania. The sale of beverages containing preservatives is prohibited in Belgium, Germany, Tunis, and Switzerland. The addition of salicylic acid to food is prohibited in Buenos Ayres and France. Holland does not permit the sale of beer containing salicylic acid and Spain forbids its addition to wine. Italy permits the addition of 0.2 per cent of boric acid to butter, but forbids the use of other preservatives.

SACCHARIN AND OTHER ARTIFICIAL SWEETENING MATERIALS.

The sale of foods containing saccharin, sucrol, and similar preparations is prohibited in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Servia, and Roumania. The importation of saccharin except for medicinal use and under prescribed conditions is prohibited by Belgium and Greece, and its medicinal use is regulated in France.

SUGAR, GLUCOSE, AND CONFECTIONS.

Sugar, glucose, etc., must be commercially pure and must be free from admixture with any foreign substance. Confections may be colored by harmless coloring materials (a list is usually specified), but must be prepared from pure ingredients and must be free from adulteration of any description.

WINE AND BEER.

Only the fermented juice of the fresh grape, subjected to the usual cellar manipulation, whose limits are carefully defined in the various countries, may be sold as wine. If any other saccharine matter or any foreign material be employed, the product must be so designated as to indicate the fact. Prohibition of the use of chemical preservatives and aniline dyes is almost universal, while the employment of all foreign coloring matter is often prohibited.

The use of chemical preservatives and foreign coloring matter with beer is usually prohibited.

CONTAMINATION WITH METALS.

Strict regulations regarding the content of poisonous metals of food receptacles and utensils used in the preparation of foods have been adopted by Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, and some of the Cantons of Switzerland.